

SOUTH BOSTON AND ITS ENTERPRISES

establishments of their kind in the country. These plants, costing \$100,000 each, and T. Johnson's plant, for the same time of business, which was burned out in the 1907 fire, but escaped the one of the year before, has also been completed, at a cost of \$50,000. That of C. W. Walters & Co. cost nearly as much. All of the burned warehouses have been rebuilt of better material, and all present a more imposing appearance. Another new and imposing structure is the Garland Hotel, which has about seventy-five rooms, wide halls, broad stairways, and is modernly equipped with electric lights, steam heating apparatus, bathrooms, sample rooms, etc.

It is an ideal hotel, and with its lovely lawn and large, airy rooms, it is especially inviting to the tired traveler seeking a good place for a month or more of rest. A first-class ice factory has been erected and put in operation to supply the people of the town and all along the two lines of railway, which cross each other here, with ice.

Municipal Energy.
In the meantime the town itself has been spending a good deal of money in bricks and mortar and other material to make South Boston up-to-date and altogether lovely. Much cash has been put in granolithic and brick sidewalks, twenty-odd thousand dollars have been spent in improving and enlarging the water works, and now, in addition to the former pumping station on Dan River, and the 75,000-gallon stand pipe, it has a new pumping station on the same stream, and another tank, and the combined works supply the town with all the water it will require for all purposes for a decade or two to come. The sewerage system is being rapidly extended, and best of all, a new and complete high school building has been completed and put in operation.

This building and the reorganized school were told about in The Times-Dispatch of March 8th. South Boston, in spite of fires and panics, is to-day a better and more vigorous town than it was before the flames and the panics came, and that is saying a great deal, for before these things happened it was described by an enthusiastic citizen of this county as the "biggest little town on the American continent."

On Monday next an election will be held on a bond issue of \$100,000 for further municipal improvements. It seems to be a foregone conclusion that the bonds will be voted. So sure are the authorities of this fact that they have already made arrangements to place the bonds.

An Important Financial Centre.
The five flourishing banks of South Boston are capitalized at \$235,000, and all pay handsome dividends on their capital stock. Their aggregate assets are about \$1,640,000. Three of them do business in their own splendidly arranged and equipped banking houses and all are offered by financiers who are noted for ability and integrity.

The oldest of the five is the Planters' and Merchants' National Bank, which has a paid up capital stock of \$100,000. This institution was organized as a State bank in 1855, and converted into a national bank in 1897. It has four and even prospered through four panics.

and very many seasons of dull business. Conservative in times of prosperity and liberal in times of depression, this bank has at all times and under all conditions enjoyed the merited confidence of the public, and is now doing a most satisfactory business, and, indeed, the largest it has ever done. It carries a surplus of \$50,000, and its total assets amount to \$700,000. The deposits to-day are about \$400,000, and its loans and discounts and bonds amount to \$415,000. The bank lives in its own handsome building, valued at \$12,000. The officers are Henry Easley, president; W. J. Jordan, vice-president, and R. E. Jordan, cashier. The board of directors is made up of the pick among the solid and careful business men of this section.

The Bank of South Boston.
The next oldest bank in the town is the Bank of South Boston, of which Joseph Stebbins, Sr., is the president. J. J. Lawson is cashier and H. J. Watkins is assistant cashier. This bank was organized in 1887, with a paid-up capital of \$50,000. Its surplus and undivided profits amount to \$50,500, and it holds first-class stocks and bonds amounting to \$32,000, while its banking-house, real estate and fixtures are valued at \$16,000. The total assets to-day foot up \$350,000, the deposits about \$250,000, and loans and discounts to about \$240,000. A more conservative and strictly business set of men than its officers and directors do not live in Virginia or anywhere else. The Bank of South Boston was a victim of last year's big fire, and lost its splendid building, but it has rebuilt more beautifully and more substantially. The finishing touches have just been put on the building, and the new fixtures and fireproof vaults and safes installed. There is not a handsomer or better equipped banking house in any town

South Boston.

- Biggest Bright Tobacco Market in the world—per capita.
- Population of the town is 4,000.
- The annual sales of Bright Tobacco are 14,000,000 to 17,000,000 pounds.
- Average per hundred pounds this year, up to date, \$11.05, including scrap and primings. Increase over last year's figures of \$2.50 per hundred.
- Six magnificent, up-to-date new warehouses, as follows: Edmondson's Warehouse—Edmondson & Sons. Flag Warehouse—Gunningham and Murray. Star Warehouse—C. M. Jordan & Co. Farmers Warehouse—Hodges & DeJanette. Edmunds Warehouse—Edmunds and Tuck. Big Four Warehouse—Lacy & Powell.

For information about tobacco interest or any other South Boston interest address

Tobacco Board of Trade,

T. B. JOHNSON, President.
J. E. LIPSCOMB, Vice-President.
H. C. LACY, Secretary and Treasurer.

of the size of this one in the country.

The First National Bank is next in size. Its paid up capital stock is \$150,000, and it has assets amounting to \$240,000, including United States bonds to the amount of \$22,500 to insure circulation. The deposits amount to about \$130,000 and loans and discounts to \$100,000. Although young, in years this bank has accumulated a surplus of nearly \$4,000. The officers are R. H. Edmondson, president; W. D. Hill, vice-president, and J. D. Tucker, cashier.

The Savings Bank.

The South Boston Savings Bank was established in 1901, and has won an enviable place in the confidence of the people. By the conservative management of its officers and directors the Savings Bank has been a success from the day when its doors were first opened. Its business has steadily increased even through hard times and panic seasons, and each year since its organization it has paid the stockholders 8 per cent dividends and in the meantime laid by a surplus and undivided profits of \$2,500. The deposits, according to the last published report, amount to \$32,000, and loans and discounts to \$30,000.

The bank's building is valued at \$6,000. The officers are Henry Easley, president; William I. Jordan, vice-president, and T. F. Fry, cashier. Mr. Fry, who is one of the youngest cashiers in the town, is the Mayor of South Boston, and it is probably due in a great measure to his ability as a financier that the town treasury keeps in such good shape, and its bonds command a premium when put on sale.

Youngest of the Banks.

The youngest of the South Boston financial institutions is the South Boston National Bank, which, with a paid-up capital of \$50,000, opened its doors for business on the 15th of November, 1906. Counting its undivided profits, this bank already has a surplus of \$3,500 and its total assets amount to \$235,000. The deposits foot up \$145,000 and the loans and discounts amount to \$110,000. The Boston National is a depository for the United States Government, and the only one in this immediate section. The officers of the bank are J. J. Lawson, president; Judge William R. Barksdale, vice-president; C. C. Barksdale, cashier, and T. C. Watkins, Jr., assistant cashier.

The Leaf Tobacco Market.

There are six leaf tobacco warehouses in South Boston, which sold in the tobacco year ending September, 1907, 13,886,917 pounds of leaf tobacco for \$1,185,753.19, which was an average of \$8.55 per 100 pounds. The same houses have sold this tobacco year up to March 31st, 12,196,513 pounds for \$1,345,882.82, which is an average of \$11.05 per 100 pounds. It will be observed that this shows an increase in the price paid of \$2.50 per 100 over that brought by last year's crop, and it also shows that South Boston is enlarging its tobacco trade. The indications now are that the total sales for the tobacco year closing next September will aggregate probably more than 15,000,000 pounds.

This market draws leaf tobacco from the counties of Halifax, Pittsylvania, Prince Edward and Campbell, in Virginia, and Caswell, Person and Granville counties, in North Carolina. This territory comprises the very heart of the bright tobacco belt. The leaf tobacco is bought here at the warehouse floors by the American Tobacco Company, the Imperial Tobacco Company, and the R. J. Reynolds Company and C. W. Walters & Co., T. B. Johnson & Co., Edmondson, Sons & Co., and a number of other independent dealers. The leaf is shipped to all parts of the country for domestic use and across the waters to every part of the world where the seductive weed is chewed or smoked.

The Pioneer Tobaccoist.

Ten years ago South Boston sold only about 4,000,000 pounds of tobacco, but it has hustling buyers and wide awake buyers, who talk for South Boston all the time and never tire of sounding its praises. From 1901 to 1902, just one year, the sales grew from 5,600,000 pounds to twice that quantity. Major Henry A. Edmondson, who, as the senior member of the firm of Edmondson, Sons & Co., is still an active tobacco buyer, and as part owner of the Edmondson Warehouse is also an active seller of the weed, is the pioneer tobaccoist of South Boston. He built the first warehouse here, established the first primery, and at one time was extensively engaged in manufacturing the weed into plug.

Major Edmondson enjoys the confidence of the people of Halifax county to a degree, and has frequently repre-

sented them in the Legislature. He is now a member of the Virginia Senate, and is as well known about the Capitol as any citizen of the Commonwealth.

Cotton and Shirt Manufacturing.

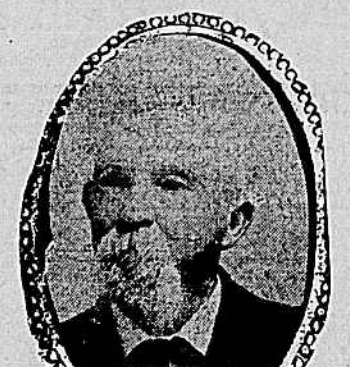
The cotton manufacturing interest of South Boston cuts a considerable figure.

The Stebbins, Lawson & Spragins Company, after their business was destroyed by fire on March 28th, 1907, discontinued the general dry goods jobbing business, confining themselves to the converting of cotton goods of which they make some specialties sold under their own copyrighted tickets, and the manufacture of negligee shirts.

In order to do this business most expeditiously, they have erected a large warehouse on Main Street near the passenger station of the Southern Railway. This building is of modern slow burning construction and is equipped with electric elevators, steam heat, etc. In their cotton goods department, which for convenience they operate under the name of Century Manufacturing Company, they are demonstrating what can be done in finishing the finer grades of cotton cloths manufactured by Southern mills.

This is a new branch of business in the South, of which they are the pioneers. One fabric on which they have made a great success is linonette for ladies' and children's wear, which they set out in white, plain colors and figures. It is extensively advertised and has a large sale over the entire country. They make many other brands of fancy cotton goods which are deservedly popular, and can be found on the counters of the largest department and retail dry goods stores.

They are also manufacturers of negligee shirts.



MAJOR HENRY A. EDMONDSON, South Boston's Pioneer Tobaccoist.

gee shirts under the name of "The Boston shirt," which retails for 50 cents and undoubtedly is the best shirt for the money on the market. The material used is very superior, they are full cut, and for style and workmanship have no superior. The best haberdashery handles them.

It is a good day for the South when it turns its attention to varied manufacturing, thus giving employment to all classes of labor and keeping at home money which has heretofore been sent elsewhere to build up and enrich other sections of the country.

The Century Cotton Mills, established here about twelve years ago by S. T. Wilson and C. A. Lukins, are now leased for a term of years to the Paramount Knitting Mills, of Chicago. This company runs a number of first-class knitting mills in the West, and they have leased the cotton mills here in which to make knitting yarns for consumption in their own knitting factories.

Great Buggy and Wagon Makers.

The manufacturing concern which has brought a vast deal of outside money to the town and has probably carried the business reputation of the away from home than any other one establishment is the Barbour Buggy Company. This company with its wagon manufacturing branch and its immense storage warehouse, making three large establishments, and its acres of lumber yards, is one of the largest concerns in the South. The Barbour Buggy Company has been manufacturing buggies for many years, and a few years ago absorbed the Virginia Wagon Company, of this place, which confines its work to the manufacture of farm wagons. The combined establishment, now known by the one name of the Barbour Buggy Company, has three very large establishments, which, with the lumber yards, drying kilns and railway side trackage, cover eight acres of land. The plant is supplied with the latest machinery from cellar to garret, and with 250 to 300 hands regularly employed they can turn out 20,000 vehicles per year.

These buggies, surreys, wagons and drays are sold throughout the South Atlantic States from Virginia to Florida, and as far to the Southwest as Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and in others, altogether, fourteen States. The buggy-making department has recently added a new line to its output. It is now making something of a specialty of the manufacture of sewing machine wagons of a superior and most durable quality. They are selling these wagons all the way from New England to Florida and Texas, and notwithstanding the dull times they find it difficult to keep up with orders. The timber consumed in these factories comes from the forests of Virginia and North Carolina. The officers of the Barbour Buggy

Company are R. S. Barbour, president; W. D. Barbour, vice-president and manager of sales; J. O. Watkins, secretary and treasurer. The Barbour Company has a repository and sales rooms in Richmond at No. 1433 East Main Street.

Other Manufacturing Plants.

The South Boston Lumber Company has one of the best equipped plants of its kind in the State. The planing mills, sash, blind and door-making department, dressed lumber departments, and in fact all the departments, are up-to-date and the proprietors, Messrs. Edmondson and Overy, are contractors on a very large scale.

The South Boston Ice Company, which not only manufactures ice, but conducts in the same connection bottling works and a steam laundry, is operating with a capital of \$50,000.

The Boston Brick Company and the Haskins Brick Company are manufacturers of brick and granolithic and concrete blocks. In this rebuilding time their local business keeps them busy at home, but in time they will be large shippers.

The South Boston Light and Power Company supply the needed electric lights and power for the town and for the people.

Hustling Real Estate Men.

Probably no agencies here have done more to advertise the town and push it to greatness than the real estate establishments and newspapers. Edmondson and Easley, real estate and insurance agents, handle town and country property, and many are the rich Halifax farms they have sold to new comers from the West. This firm has perhaps the largest list of desirable farm lands of any agency in Southside Virginia. The upbuilding of their town and section seems to be more their object than to make money, although they are doing pretty well. I thank you.

W. D. Hill & Co., who do an exclusively farm property business, have brought many Westerners and Northerners to Halifax county, and the records show that of the 150 or more who have come in under their chaperonage, not a single one has become satisfied, for all of them are doing well.

South Boston has two weekly papers, The News and the Halifax Gazette. They are regarded as among the best weekly journals in the State. South Boston would not tolerate any other kind.

Competing Rates Everywhere.

South Boston has two railways, the Southern and the Norfolk and Western, which latter reaches here by its Lynchburg and Durham branch, and of course the town enjoys the competitive freight rate, which enables manufacturers and jobbers to ship their products and goods to all points of the compass as cheap as other towns of greater size. The buggy and wagon factories and other manufacturing concerns, as well as the big wholesale houses are shipping goods to Texas at the same rate the same goods are shipped from New York, and they go to New York, too, for shipment by the Mallory Steamship Line, as far as Galveston and Houston.

These unsurpassed railway facilities have enabled South Boston to make a wonderful success for a small town in the wholesale line. Several wholesale grocers, two wholesale hardware concerns and the Keystone Drug Company, wholesale and manufacturing druggists, have been an continue to be very successful.

It goes without saying after what has been recorded above that South Boston does an enormous retail business, and it may be added that the fifty or more retail stores here are strictly up-to-date and I doubt if there is a town of its size in the country that has as good and as attractive dry goods and department stores, that of Samuel F. Gilliland being one that would do credit to a city of 50,000 inhabitants.

It would be needless to add that the prosperous people live in good private residences if the fact were not especially noticeable that the town has an unusually large number of unusually costly and handsome private homes. The veranda of the Hotel Garland last night and the question was asked, "What is the best all round business town under 20,000 inhabitants in Virginia?" Three of the trade evangelists named South Boston, and the fourth said, "No, I don't think it should not wonder if the three were very nearly right. Likely enough they were altogether correct."

WHERE RANDOLPH MADE MINT JULEPS

(Continued From First Page.)

do a general mercantile business, handling everything that the average Lunenburg can possibly call for—everything from a wheat thresher down to liver pills and other patent medicines. There is no drug store at Lunenburg Courthouse, and if one may be allowed to judge from the healthful glow on the cheeks of the 150 people residing there, a druggist is not needed.

Finest Brick on Earth.

The village stands upon a high hill, which is composed of the reddest mud, and the most of it to be found within the same compass anywhere on the globe. The hill is a mud that sticks closer than a brother, and brought some of it away with me, and a bootblack charged me double price to work on my shoes. I will own Lunenburg real estate on the skirt of my overcoat the long as that garment holds, and existences. If the new Virginia Railway had run by the courthouse, instead of four miles away, and thus afforded this hill quick transportation facilities to the cities of Virginia, there would have been millions in the brick-making business there. This is no joke, and the courthouse building, now eighty-one years old, stands as evidence of the fact that the clay from the hill makes the prettiest and the most enduring red brick to be made. Those in the courthouse building look as fresh and as red to-day as they did the day the builders placed them in the grand old pile.

Old-Time Masonry.

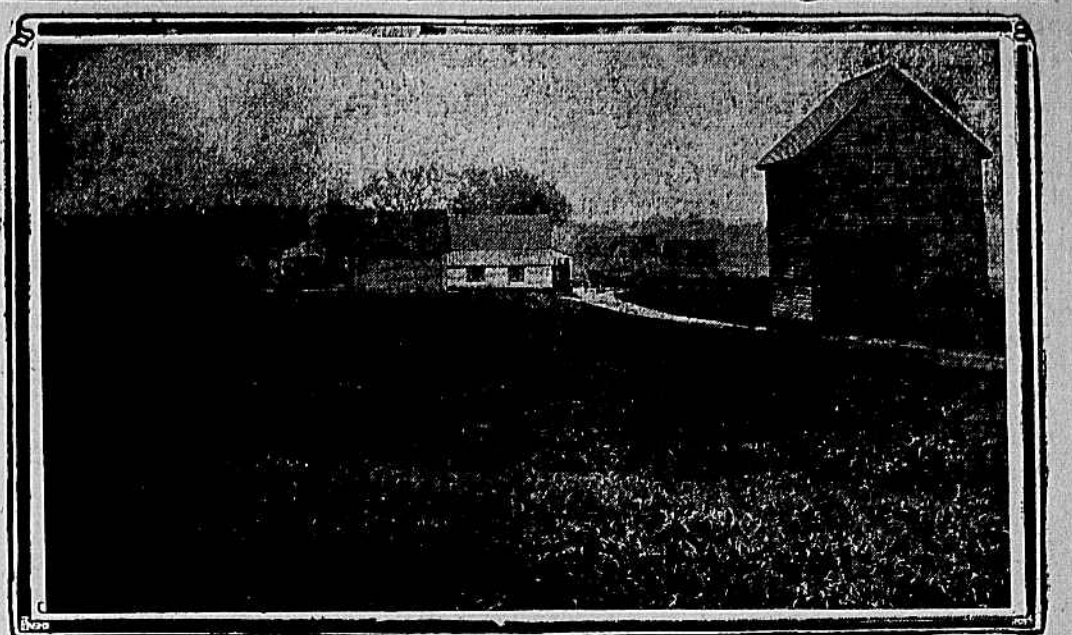
The courthouse was erected in 1826, and but off slight change has been made in it since it was completed. The stairway to the upper rooms was originally on the inside of the building. In the building was a few years ago placed on the outer side within the broad front porch.

The brick walls, twice as thick as brick walls are made in these days, give the entire building an air of solidity and defy the rays of the summer sun. On the hottest day in August the upper and lower rooms of this old building are as cool as one could wish. There are only three rooms on the

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STOCK AND GRASS FARM NEAR KENBRIDGE.



FARM AND HOME OF CAPTAIN WILLIAM HEATHORNE, IN LUNENBURG COUNTY.

upper floor—the court-room and two jury-rooms. On the lower floor are the offices of the clerk (two rooms), the sheriff and the county treasurer. Out in the large and beautifully shaded yard are four little one-room offices that were built for lawyers. In the olden time it was the custom to build small offices for resident lawyers on the court-green in every county in the State.

I doubt if there is another county in the State which still clings to this ancient custom. One of these little offices has a sign over the door which imparts the information that it was built in 1812. It looks as if it might have been erected even earlier than that.

John Randolph's Headquarters.

When this little office was young it was occupied by a friend of John Randolph of Roanoke, and whenever that eccentric statesman visited Lunenburg, which was very often, this office was his headquarters. About its door he held many informal receptions and greeted his admiring constituents, and within its narrow walls he mixed many a mint julep. The aged office is now occupied by Messrs. Nelson & Churnside, two young and brilliant members of the bar. They say it has a leaky roof, but otherwise it is a good office yet.

The splendid red brick courthouse was erected in the year 1826, taking the place of a wooden building not half the size of its successor. The records show that its total cost was \$6,000. As before intimated, they do not build court-houses so substantially in this day and time, but if this one should in any way be destroyed, the people of Lunenburg could not have it replaced as it is for less than \$15,000. More than likely it would cost as much as \$20,000.

Ancient Records Lying Around.

Mr. John L. Yates, the Circuit Court clerk, has charge of the old building, and keeps it as neat as a new one. A clerk in the office has held now for nearly three years, and will continue to hold until he dies, he has charge of some of the oldest records to be found in the Commonwealth outside of the State Library. The first records made of the county, and in fact, all the records that ever have been made, are stored in the building. In Mr. Yates's care. The county of Lunenburg was created in 1746, being cut off from the then enormous territory known as Brunswick county. The record of the first court ever held in the county, and the record of the first deed ever passed between land donors, are in the clerk's office, as are all the records and all the deeds made from that day to this.

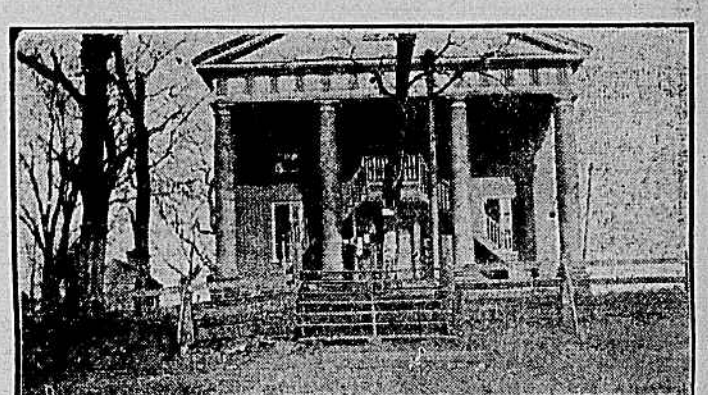
Writing that Defogs.

These old documents are just as legible and readable to-day as they were when the fine old English penmen placed them upon the books with the old-time quill pen. Well, yes; they are just as plain and as clear as when first written, but hardly as readable to the present generation. The handwriting is bold and plain enough, but the language is a little befogging, and many of the letters are as different from the present way of forming them as the old goose quill pen which made them is different from the typewriter. The s in every instance would be called f if read by a schoolboy of to-day. The u is entirely missing, a v being used where the u should be, and for a v a curious little character is made which looks like nothing that has appeared for the last hundred years in any of the books that were printed. Of course there are no dollar marks and no remote allusions to dollars and cents.

It was all pounds, shillings and pence. These old records also show that a good deal of land was sold to be paid for in tobacco. The court records, too, show that fines imposed by the judges and magistrates were often made payable in the seductive weed.

Good Luck and Carelessness.

That these old records are still in existence is due to good luck, and not to the foresight or carefulness of the people of Lunenburg county. They are on hand simply because the county has never had a fire or a tornado to destroy its courthouse, and has always had honest officials. The books containing this ancient information are kept on ordinary shelves, in the



LUNENBURG'S FIVE OLD COURTHOUSE.

clerk's office, with no protection whatever from fire or thieves, who might get good money for them; or from rats and moths, or from dust and weather conditions. The Board of Supervisors of the county owe it to the State, and to the country and to coming generations, to provide a fire and burglar-proof vault for the preservation of these ancient and valuable documents.

If they are too stingy, the county is not too poor, to do that, then the old books and records ought to be sent to Richmond or somewhere else where they may find safety in a vault.

Where Randolph Last Spoke.

Some of the ablest of the old-time statesmen of Virginia have addressed the sovereigns from the steps of the old courthouse and within its walls. John Randolph often spoke there, and one among the last speeches he made on the hustings was in this courthouse, and that was when it was a brand-new house, and was an unusually magnificent place from which to address the sovereigns. There were but few if any court-house buildings in the State, in 1830 say, that equaled in splendor and magnificence the new Lunenburg courthouse. There are a good many now that surpass it in size and beauty of architecture, but there is not one in the State or any other State that is more substantially built or better suited for its purpose. It needs a fireproof vault, however, and a little more up-to-dateness generally in the arrangement of its offices.

I am told that some hypercritics in the regions 'round about have questioned the statement in my last communication from here to the effect that there are outcroppings of coal in the county and evidences of gold in some of the hills. I did not pretend to make these statements as of my own knowledge, but simply gave the opinion expressed to me by citizens of the county, gave my authority, and merely said that these people believe both coal and gold may be found. The truth is, the doubting Thomases and hypercritics to the contrary notwithstanding, that both have been found in the hills of Lunenburg county, and the common sense conclusion is that they may be found again. Can they be mined in paying quantities? Well, that is a gray horse of another color. Certain it is that there are men in the county who think they can be, and it is also quite certain that nobody will ever find what can be found until somebody makes the search.

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